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COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
Forty-first session
10-21 March 1997
Agenda item 3 (c)

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTION IN THE CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

Draft agreed conclusions submitted by the Vice-Chairperson of the Commission, Ljudmila Boskova (Bulgaria), on the critical area of concern: women in power and decision-making

1. The Beijing Platform for Action[1] emphasized that a comprehensive, broad-based approach to women's empowerment was essential if women were to fully participate in decision-making at all levels of political, economic and social life. Women's political participation and equal representation are linked to wider issues of economic empowerment, education and training, human rights, social attitudes, values and social support systems. Achieving the goal of equal participation of men and women in decision-making would provide the balance that is needed in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning.

2. Governments, international organizations, political parties, trade unions and non-governmental organizations should join together to accelerate the implementation of strategies that promote gender balance in political decision-making and in conflict prevention and resolution. They should integrate women's perspectives in all stages of policy formulation and decision-making. They should also support diverse decision-making styles and organizational practices and take the necessary steps to ensure a gender-sensitive workplace.

3. Research, including a gender-impact assessment of electoral systems to identify measures that would reverse the downward trend in respect of women in parliaments worldwide, should be supported.

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[1] Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (A/CONF.177/20 and Add.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

4. Political parties are urged to find ways and means to remove discriminatory practices, incorporate gender issues into party platforms, and ensure women's access to executive bodies, including leadership positions, as well as to appointed positions and electoral nominating processes.

5. Mechanisms such as establishing a minimum percentage of representation for both sexes and/or quota systems should be instituted. Other temporary special measures for increasing the number of women in decision-making in legislatures and political parties should also be implemented.

6. Governments should establish gender balance in decision-making in administration and public appointments at all levels and in the judicial and diplomatic services by establishing specific time-bound targets.

7. Governments and civil society should promote awareness of gender issues and call for their consistent mainstreaming in legislation and public policies.

8. Governments should examine their communications policies to ensure the projection of positive images of women in politics and public life in general.

9. The media should project a positive image of women and women should use the media as a tool for their campaigns for political office and to publicize gender-sensitive public policies.

10. Governments, the private sector, political parties, trade unions and non-governmental organizations should review criteria and processes for recruitment and appointment to advisory and decision-making bodies so as to guarantee gender balance.

11. Training programmes in conducting campaigns, fund-raising and parliamentary procedures should be funded by Governments and political parties to encourage and enable women to run successfully for, be elected to, and serve in, public office.

12. Governments and the United Nations system should promote women's active and equal participation as governmental and non-governmental representatives, special rapporteurs and envoys in processes of good offices and mediation for peacekeeping and peace-building.

13. Governments and international organizations should actively promote the participation and equal representation of women in order to create an enabling environment for peace, reconciliation and reconstruction of their communities.

14. Governments should actively promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in politics and power structures through women's representation in decision-making, both in quantitative (critical mass of 30 per cent) and in qualitative terms.

15. Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations should continue to collect and disseminate data and sex-disaggregated statistics to monitor the representation of women in government at all levels, political

parties, trade unions and non-governmental organizations, as well as the participation of women in peace and security.

16. The Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Personnel and General Administrative Questions (CCAQ/PER)) should continue to monitor steps being taken in the United Nations Secretariat to achieve the target of 50 per cent women in managerial and decision-making positions by the year 2000 as well as steps to achieve gender balance in the United Nations system as a whole.

17. International and multilateral agencies should convene a workshop on best practices and lessons learned for achieving gender balance in institutions, including accountability mechanisms and incentives, and on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes, including bilateral and multilateral assistance.

18. Member States should be encouraged to appoint women to United Nations delegations, including those to the Security Council, the First Committee of the General Assembly, other political, economic, trade and legal committees, and other bodies where women's participation is negligible.

19. Representation of minority women and women from other under-represented or disadvantaged groups should be promoted by Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations in decision-making positions and forums.

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FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN:
REVIEW OF MAINSTREAMING IN ORGANIZATIONS OF THE
UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Azerbaijan*, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Ecuador, Kazakstan*, Kyrgyzstan*, Pakistan*, South Africa* and Turkey*: draft resolution

Release of women and children taken hostage in armed conflicts and imprisoned

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling its resolutions 39/2 of 31 March 1995 and 40/1 of 22 March 1996,

Recalling the relevant provisions contained in the instruments of international humanitarian law relative to the protection of women and children in areas of armed conflict,

Welcoming the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action by the Fourth World Conference on Women,[1] including the provisions regarding violence against women and children,

Expressing grave concern at the continuation of armed conflicts in many regions throughout the world and the human suffering and humanitarian emergencies they have caused,

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* In accordance with rule 69 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

[1] Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (A/CONF.177/20 and Add.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

Emphasizing that all forms of violence committed against the civilian population, including women and children in areas of armed conflict, including capturing them as hostages, seriously contravene international humanitarian law, in particular the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 for the protection of victims of war,

Expressing its strong belief that the rapid and unconditional release of women and children taken hostage in areas of armed conflict will promote the implementation of the noble goals enshrined in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,

1. Condemns violent acts in contravention of international humanitarian law against civilian women and children in areas of armed conflict, and calls for an effective response to such acts, including the immediate release of such women and children taken hostage;

2. Strongly urges all parties to armed conflicts to respect fully the norms of international humanitarian law in armed conflict and to take all necessary measures for the protection of women and children, as well as for the immediate release of women and children taken hostage;

3. Urges all parties to conflicts to provide unimpeded access to specialized humanitarian assistance for women and children taken hostage in areas of armed conflict;

4. Requests the Secretary-General, and all relevant international organizations to use their capabilities and efforts to facilitate the release of all women and children taken hostage in area of armed conflict and urges all States to use their influence to this end;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to prepare, taking into account the information provided by Member States and relevant international organizations, a report on the implementation of the present resolution, for submission to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-second session.

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FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: REVIEW OF MAINSTREAMING IN ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

United Republic of Tanzania*: draft resolution

Older women, human rights and development

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling its resolution 36/4 of 20 March 1992, in which it emphasized the need to adopt an approach for the advancement of women that takes into account all stages of life, so as to identify measures that respond to women's needs,[1]

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 49/162 of 23 December 1994 in which the Assembly called attention to the fact that the United Nations had estimated that there were 208 million women aged 60 and above in 1985, of which about half lived in the developed world and half in the developing world, and that by the year 2025 that number had been projected to increase to 604 million older women for the world as a whole, of which nearly 70 per cent would be living in the developing countries,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 40/30 of 29 November 1985, in which it was emphasized that the elderly must be considered an important and necessary element in the development process at all levels within a given society,

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* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China.

[1] Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1992, Supplement No. 4 (E/1994/24), chap. I.C.

Aware that age segregation, in addition to sex stereotyping, makes the social and economic problems of older women even more acute and that they are often viewed as beneficiaries only and not as contributors to development,

Calling attention to the urgent need to develop methodologies to improve the data collection of disaggregated statistics by gender and age and to identify and evaluate the different forms of activities of older women which are not normally recognized as having an economic value, in particular in the informal sectors and as caregivers,

Also recognizing the importance of increasing options and opportunities for older women's economic and social development in developing countries,

Taking into consideration the fact that the United Nations has proclaimed 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons,[2]

Taking also into consideration the Secretary-General's report on the fourth review and appraisal of the International Plan of Action on Ageing,[3]

1. Invites the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to pay particular attention to discrimination on grounds of age when evaluating national reports on the implementation of the Convention on All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

2. Recommends that the Commission, which has been assigned a central role in monitoring the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all policies and programmes within the United Nations system, should ensure that the contributions and needs of women of all ages, including those of older women, are taken into account;

3. Also recommends that the preparations for the International Year of Older Persons include a gender perspective;

4. Invites the Statistical Office of the United Nations, in cooperation with the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, to expand the conceptual analysis and undertake a follow-up study on their pioneering work on methods of compiling and analysing statistics on older women which would provide specific techniques to improve the use of available data;

5. Also invites the Institute to develop analytical tools and methodologies for identifying options and mechanisms for valuating and fully recognizing the role of older women as important members of the social, economic, political and cultural spheres and for identifying the barriers to the participation of older women in those spheres;

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[2] General Assembly resolution 47/5.

[3] E/CN.5/1997/4.

6. Further invites the United Nations Development Fund for Women to assist developing countries in increasing options and opportunities for older women's economic and social development by providing technical and financial assistance for incorporating older women's dimension into development at all levels;

7. Reiterates the request made to the Division for the Advancement of Women by the Commission in its resolution 36/4 to establish, in cooperation with non-governmental organization's model profiles of the current situation of older women which will permit all countries, whatever their level of development, to make the necessary projections;

8. Decides that at its forty-second session, under the agenda item "Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men", it will consider the status of older women and make substantive recommendations thereon;

9. Also decides that, at its forty-second session, in examining the critical area of concern "Human rights of women", it will also pay attention to the violation of older women's rights;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the key global issues regarding the differential impact of population ageing on men and women as a contribution to the International Year of Older Persons and to submit the report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-third session.

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FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: REVIEW OF MAINSTREAMING IN ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

United Republic of Tanzania*: draft resolution

The Economic and Social Council,

Having considered with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General concerning the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women,[1]

Recalling the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, in particular paragraph 260 concerning Palestinian women and children,[2] and the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women,[3]

Recalling also its resolution 1996/5 and other relevant United Nations resolutions,

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* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China.

[1] E/CN.6/1997/2, sect. II.A.

[2] Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

[3] Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (A/CONF.177/20 and Add.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

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Recalling the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women[4] as it concerns the protection of civilian populations,

Aware of the signing by the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Government of Israel of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements on 13 September 1993[5] and of the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip on 28 September 1995, both in Washington, D.C., within the framework of the Middle East peace process,

Concerned about the continuing difficult situation of Palestinian women in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and about the severe consequences of continuous Israeli illegal settlements activities as well as the harsh economic conditions and other consequences for the situation of Palestine women and their families, resulting from the frequent closure and isolation of the occupied territory,

1. Stresses its support for the Middle East peace process and the need for full implementation of the agreements already reached between the parties;

2. Reaffirms that the Israeli occupation remains a major obstacle for Palestinian women with regard to their advancement, self-reliance and integration in the development planning of their society;

3. Demands that Israel, the occupying Power, comply fully with the provisions and principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[6] the Regulations annexed to The Hague Convention IV of 18 October 1907[7] and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949,[8] in order to protect the rights of Palestinian women and their families;

4. Calls upon Israel to facilitate the return of all refugees and displaced Palestinian women and children to their homes and properties in the occupied Palestinian territory, in compliance with the relevant United Nations resolutions;

5. Urges Member States, international financial organizations of the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and other relevant institutions to intensify their efforts to provide financial and technical assistance to Palestinian women for the creation of projects responding to their needs, especially during the transitional period;

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[4] General Assembly resolution 48/104.

[5] A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

[6] General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

[7] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907 (New York, Oxford University Press, 1915).

[8] United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973, p. 287.

6. Requests the Commission on the Status of Women to continue to monitor and take action with regard to the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, in particular paragraph 260 concerning Palestinian women and children, and the Beijing Platform for Action;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to review the situation and to assist Palestinian women by all available means, and to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-second session a report on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.